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FOR THE GAZETTE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MR. FENNO,

A FEW ſuggeſtions on the all important ſubject of funding the public debt, which are dictated by a regard to the future welfare and happineſs of this country, will I hope meet with a liberal interpretation from a view of the motives which induce them. The late revolution in the government of theſe States conſidered in an abſtract light was undoubtedly an event of great magnitude and conſequence ; yet upon the active operation of the powers veſted by the new conſtitution in the great legiſlature of the union, will depend all thoſe civil bleſſings which an enlightened and well informed people are capable of enjoying. To the defalcation of public promiſes in this country for many years paſt, and conſequent want of private confidence, may be moſtly attributed the evils we long ſuffered, even to the loweſt ebb of national degradation ; while the general ſenſe entertained of the cauſe of thoſe evils which was diſcoverable in the exertions made to procure their remedy by the new organization of our political ſyſtem, ſeemed to evidence to a candid world, that the defection exiſted rather in the head than the heart, and that we wanted only to become acquainted with the means of relief to practice upon them ; it is yet to be hoped that this juſt expectation will not fail to become realized in the determination of government relating to the funding ſyſtem ; and the more eſpecially, when we reflect that a failure now, will be proportionably diſadvantageous, as the ſteps hitherto taken have enhanced the public anticipation and confidence.—Having made theſe general obſervations, I come to take a view of that part of the Secretary's report that relates to the aſſumption of the State debts, and which appears to be a meaſure recommended by every motive of ſound policy, evident expediency, and ſubſtantial juſtice. I have never been able to diſcern any real difference between the two kinds of debt, continental and State; I mean ſo far as either were contracted in the proſecution of the late war, and to anſwer the public exigencies ; I believe on examination, the chief diſtinction will be found merely adventitious, and to exiſt only in form—nor even ſo far in form, as to impair the obligation which the united government is under to provide for their diſcharge, or equal place in the funding plan ; they are *both* the price of our independence, and preſent national conſequence, and muſt be both guaranteed by the ſceptre of juſtice—that it is expedient they ſhould be thrown into one general maſs, will appear from the conſideration, that the ſeveral States have relinquiſhed to the government of the union the means by which they would be enabled to make a ſeparate proviſion for their payment—for though they may poſſeſs a concurrent power of laying exciſe, &c. yet the confuſion which would reſult from the exerciſe of that power to ſuch a degree is ſufficiently obvious, to illuſtrate the inexpediency of its adoption, to avoid the great injuries ariſing to the intereſt of individuals, as well as to the efficacy of public meaſures by ſuch complex ſyſtems of finance, and diverſe modes of taxation, may be viewed as one of the efficient cauſes of the late change in our government. The policy of eſtabliſhing one uniform ſyſtem of finance through the union, muſt obtrude itſelf on the mind as the natural dictate of common ſenſe and obſervation ; and warranted by the happy experience of many other nations ; it will have a great tendency to leſſen thoſe ſpeculations in the funds, which in diſcuſſing the ſubject of diſcrimination were ſo ſtrongly urged as being of public detriment—for although negotiations in the public funds will be ever found to exiſt, yet the degree will be determined by the meaſures which government ſhall adopt for the ſupport of public credit—this once well eſtabliſhed, will be equally known by all, and private neceſſity, rather than a diffidence of public faith, will in future cauſe the alienation of public paper much below its nominal value ; by the aſſumption of the State debts the ſinews of government will be placed in a ſituation beſt calculated for our future ſupport and protection, and draw in that direction from which their greateſt ſtrength will reſult, while the danger of a diviſion will be much diminiſhed—but let me aſk the queſtion, ſhould one claſs of public creditors be now deſerted, upon what grounds can government place its expectations of future ſupport from individuals, in caſes of need ? And that ſuch caſes will exiſt cannot be doubted.—The diſcuſſion of the ſubject treated of in this paper naturally draws forth the moſt latent feelings of the human breaſt—has to combat with deep rooted prejudices, State politics, perſonal envy, ambition and avarice—while it involves in its conſequences and dependencies, objects of as much importance as perhaps may ever arreſt the attention of government.---It is therefore not to be wondered, that in an aſſembly of freemen, it ſhould be a long time debated, thoroughly inveſtigated, and fully examined in every ſhape and complexion it is capable of aſſuming ; nor is it leſs to be doubted that the reſult will be conformable to thoſe principles of genuine patriotiſm and liberal policy, which have ſo often marked the American public tranſactions, and on which depends the future credit of theſe United States, the reſpectability of our national government, and perhaps our political exiſtence.

AMERICANUS.

CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 24, 1790.

IN committee of the whole, on the report of the Secretary of the Treaſury.——Mr. BENSON in the chair.——The aſſumption of the State Debts under conſideration.

Mr. STONE, after an introduction of ſome length, obſerved, that the meaſure of aſſuming the State Debts is contrary to the Conſtitution. It may be uſed as a mean to bribe a State into meaſures to anſwer particular purpoſes. He oppoſed it as tending to annihilate the State governments.

The aſſumption of the State debts was not contemplated in the Conſtitution, the powers of the Conſtitution are defined ; but the aſſumption of the Debts of the States will be an accumulation of power in the hands of the general government—powers not ſuppoſed to be veſted in it.

He obſerved, that this buſineſs would probably terminate in the abolition of the State governments, as being altogether ſuperfluous.

The amount of the preſent aggregate of the State Debts being unknown, may operate unequally and very unjuſtly—eſpecially when it is conſidered that many of the charges are for unauthoriſed ſervices, the amount of which is involved in total uncertainty, ſo that it is a perfect hazard whether juſtice is done or not. He adverted to the exertions of Maryland and Virginia during the war ; and obſerved, that he thought with a gentleman from Virginia, that when the preciſe exertions, ſervices, and ſacrifices of the ſeveral States are fully known, the preſent apparent diſparity in their merits and expences will be found to be much leſs than it has been ſuppoſed.

He replied to the obſervation that the State creditors would be ſacrificed if they were not provided for by Congreſs. He obſerved, that they might do them ſtrict juſtice, if the funds which the States have had to pay their intereſt from, is left to them, and they will not be wanted for the Continent except on the idea of funding theſe debts. He urged the advantages which would reſult to the States, and to the creditors from the particular States raiſing the revenue themſelves, and this he aſſerted would be done with great eaſe and certainty.

Mr. BURKE was in favor of the aſſumption. He adverted to the ſtate of the debt of South Carolina, and obſerved, that ſince the Impoſt was aſſumed by the Continent, it will be utterly impoſſible for her to pay the intereſt of 5000000 of dollars, her State debt. With reſpect to the weakening or annihilating the State governments, if this was likely to be the caſe, it is too late to object as the Conſtitution is already eſtabliſhed, and it is our duty to plant it in the ſoil as firmly and as favorably to the liberties of the people as poſſible. He obſerved that on honeſt and juſt principles he muſt vote for the propoſition.

Mr. SEDGWICK ſaid he roſe with great diffidence and conſiderable reluctance, to expreſs his opinion, on this important ſubject, a ſubject on the juſt determination of which depended, in his opinion, the future happineſs and welfare of this country.—That his reluctance was founded in a conſciouſneſs that many gentlemen, conſidered Maſſachuſetts, as having, a very particular intereſt in the deciſion. But as other gentlemen had witneſſed to the ſentiments, circumſtances and intereſts, of the ſtates they repreſented, he ſhould preſume to follow their example; and the rather, becauſe by purſuing, this courſe, there would be exhibited to the view and contemplation of the committee, a pretty juſt picture of the ſtate, as related to the preſent ſubject of deliberation.

Mr. Sedgwick declared that he had been long and intimately acquainted with the people of Maſſachuſetts, that he believed that in no age or country, had ever exiſted a people, more diſpoſed to ſubmit to good government, nor more confirmed in virtuous and induſtrious habits. That he had ſuffered the inexpreſſible pain, of ſeeing this people, in arms againſt their own government. A government adminiſtered by men annually choſen by themſelves, That the cauſe of this inſurrection was the oppreſſion under which the citizens groaned, from the impoſition of taxes, to ſatisfy the public creditors of a debt incurred merely for national purpoſes. That this debt was created with the utmoſt economy. That the government in the impoſition of taxes, was influenced by the moſt virtuous motives of making compenſation, to that meritorious claſs of citizens, on whoſe exertions and ſervices, the liberties of this country had depended, in an hour of danger. That from our circumſtances, and the nature of our government, the ſtate legiſlatures, by whom theſe debts were contracted, were in fact, and ought now to be conſidered, as the national agents, that therefore the creditors of the ſtates, had a claim on the honor and juſtice of Congreſs, which would be violated, if their demands ſhould remain unprovided for.

That it had been objected to the aſſumption, that it would tend to produce a conſolidation of the powers of government, by a deſtruction of the popularity and energy of the ſtate governments. In anſwer to this, it was obſerved, that no member of the committee, would entertain the anti-national idea, of the continuanae of the preſent, inequality of burdens in the ſeveral ſtates.—That all men of intelligence contemplated an adjuſtment of the claims of the individual ſtates, as a thing indiſpenſible to the preſervation of our national union. That whenever that deſirable object was obtained, the ſtate debts, which were the claims of the individual ſtates, muſt be annihilated, that therefore the evil contemplated, if it was ſuch, muſt eventually take place.

Mr. Sedgwick obſerved, however, that he had never been a proſelyte to the doctrine, that the ſtate debts were a neceſſary engine to the exiſtence of the energy or popularity of the ſtate governments. That in his mind it was a ſtrange and unfounded aſſertion, that the poſſeſſion of the affectionate regard of the people, by a government, depended on the neceſſity of impoſing grievous burdens. That it was true, that the ſtate governments were in the poſſeſſion and exerciſe of almoſt all thoſe powers by which government was endeared to man. They afforded protection and gave ſecurity to life, liberty and property; puniſhed offences injurious to ſociety ; and gave to individuals a redreſs for the injuries they ſuffered. They operated, therefore, only in acts of beneficence, except in the impoſition of taxes, which had very abſurdly been conſidered, as the foundation of their importance and popularity.

Mr. Sedgwick then obſerved that the diſcuſſion of the propoſition before the committee, neceſſarily involved two queſtions.

1ſt, Is Congreſs by the principles of the conſtitution, authoriſed to aſſume the ſtate debts.

2d, Suppoſing the power to exiſt, does prudence, policy and juſtice dictate the propoſed meaſure ?

With regard to the firſt of theſe queſtions, he ſaid, it ſhould be obſerved ; that Congreſs by the conſtitution is authoriſed, to levy money in all inſtances ; where in their opinion, the expenditure ſhall be for the "general welfare ;" an anſwer therefore, to the ſecond of theſe queſtions, would determine on the firſt; for if prudence, policy and juſtice, dictated the aſſumption of the ſtate debts, it muſt be for the general welfare that they ſhould be aſſumed.

"Let it then be enquired" ſaid Mr. Sedgwick for what purpoſes were theſe debts contracted ? The true anſwer is known to all, to ſecure the peace, liberty and independence of the United States. Can it want demonſtration, that an expence incurred for a joint benefit, ſhould be a general charge on all, in proportion to their reſpective abilities? By the principles of our conſtitution, the inequality ariſing from our former ſituation, which is already ſo ſeverely felt, and from the continuance of which, ſuch enormous miſchiefs are to be apprehended, is ſtrictly guarded againſt, and this alteration is juſtly conſidered as one of the moſt important improvements in our national ſyſtem. If this equality of burden, in a common cauſe, and for the ſupport of a joint intereſt, is equitable, and that it is ſo my mind is ſelf evident ; will it not unqueſtionably follow, that the propoſition now under conſideration ſhould be adopted ?

To this Mr. Sedgwick obſerved, it might be objected that by the ſettlement of the accounts, of the individuals States, with the United States, the purpoſes he wiſhed would be obtained.

To this he anſwered, that the aſſumption of the State debts would facilitate the ſettlement of thoſe accounts ; and indeed remove almoſt all the obſtacles, in the execution of that arduous buſineſs. For although a State, after the aſſumption takes place, may be in ſuch circumſtances as to have no particular benefit, reſulting from an ultimate adjuſtment of the accounts, yet it can have no ſtrong motive to oppoſe it. But that independent of the aſſumption, there are ſo many difficulties to be ſurmounted, as to render the event, if not wholly impracticable, at leaſt highly improbable. He remarked, that as yet no ratio was provided for the apportionment of the expences of the war ; to obtain this, one of two modes might be adopted. either 1ſt. an arbitrary determination by the legiſlature, or 2d. by a like determination by commiſſioners, who ſhould be appointed, with plenary powers for that purpoſe.--- He conſidered this determination arbitrary, becauſe there were no conſtitutional *data*, from which the ratio ſhould be formed---that whether the one or the other mode ſhould eventually be elected, it was againſt every calculation of probability, that it would afford univerſal ſatisfaction, 'here then ſad he' in the commencement of this buſineſs will exiſt a cauſe of diſaffection, whereas the tranquil accompliſhment of it, will require the moſt cordial good will and confidence among all the parties concerned. But ſuppoſe the ratio provided, and ſuppoſe further, the debts and credits of the ſeveral States aſcertained, the inſurmountable obſtacle then occurs, how ſhall thoſe ballances be adjuſted ? Here three modes of adminiſtering juſtice for the extraordinary exertions of particular States are to be conſidered, 1ſt. by an aſſumption in a manner ſimilar to the one now propoſed---2d. by ſome kind of compulſion to be adminiſtered to the delinquent States, and 3d. by a voluntary contribution to the States moſt in advance, either by the general government or by the individual States which were comparatively in arrear ?

He obſerved that he conceived it muſt be obvious, from a contemplation of the ſubject that if the aſſumption was ever to take place now was the proper time. That he believed no gentleman would ſeriouſly contemplate the execution of juſtice on any viſionary ſchemes of compulſion---if then, ſaid he we are to abandon the propoſition now before the committee for an aſſumption; if we cannot expect by compulſion to do what juſtice ſo loudly demands, it is of the utmoſt importance, deliberately and candidly to conſider, whether we can reaſonably expect the event we ought to wiſh from voluntary contribution.

From our own experience, and that of others, could we even gueſs what meaſures would be adopted by a government, under any given circumſtances ? In the ſucceſsful ſtruggle of the United Netherlands againſt the tyranny of the Spaniſh monarch the neceſſary ſupplies had been very unequally furniſhed by the ſeveral States ; thoſe States which made the moſt extraordinary exertions, had never been able to obtain any juſt compenſation.

Mr. Sedgwick obſerved, that the unfortunate tranſaction, which was denominated the *Penobſcot expedition*, had been repeatedly mentioned. That therefore, he would take the liberty to declare, as his opinion, that from that circumſtance alone, a ſtrong argument was afforded, in favor of the propoſition under conſideration. He would not at preſent, be underſtood in expreſſing the ſentiments of his conſtituents on this ſubject; to declare his own. Language to the following import was, however, the language of the well informed in the State he repreſented. *We have already, experienced what juſt dependance may be placed, on national engagements, when a performance depends alone on a cool and inoperative ſenſe of honor or duty. The citizens of Maſſachuſetts have during the war, by an unparrallelled exertion, and ſpirit of enterpriſe, created a navy, which was neceſſary, for the protection of her commerce, and her extended ſea coaſt. This navy, in a ſingle day was demoliſhed, in an unſucceſsful attempt; to repel an invaſion of her territory, by the public enemy. Yet altho the payment of ſuch expences, was expreſsly provided for, by the terms on which we were then united, every application for juſtice, hath been hitherto ineffectual.*

On the other hand, there were not wanting, perhaps in each of the ſtates, reſpectable and influential men, who conſidered this claim of Maſſachuſetts as not only an unfounded, but an audacious demand. That this demand would ultimately be either allowed or rejected ; if the latter, it would operate in that State, as a cauſe againſt voluntary contribution : If the former, it would tend to produce the ſame effect, perhaps in every other State.

Mr. Sedgwick further obſerved that the extra expence of Maſſachuſetts in raiſing men for the *general* defence, and what ſhe and her citizens had loſt by the old money, was equal to all the debt ſhe now owes ; that other States too had pretenſions which appeared to them to be equally well-founded. Suppoſing, he ſaid, "that in the ultimate ſettlement, juſtice ſhall be done to all, will not the prejudices, reſulting from ſelf-intereſt, and the expectations created by them, be diſappointed ? Have not the citizens of America been taught to believe, and do they not in fact ſuppoſe, that the States to which they belong, are in advance, greatly beyond their reſpective proportions ? Can it be imagined, that perfect confidence will exiſt, and the public mind remain in a ſtate of tranquility, when its ardent hopes and expectations ſhall be diſappointed ? Will not a general belief, unfavorable to the honor and integrity of the government prevail ? And can it be believed that the energy of our government, or its exiſtence, to any valuable purpoſe, can remain, under the operation of jealouſy and diſtruſt ?"

Mr. Sedgwick declared that he did verily believe, that an honeſt, an equitable ſettlement ſubmitted to and diſcharged, would operate greatly in favor of Maſſachuſetts, and he ſuppoſed other gentlemen had the ſame opinion of the States to which *they* belonged; but when it was remembered, that the accounts muſt be ſettled by men intereſted, as belonging to ſome of the States, he believed ſhould their ultimate deciſion be certainly right---ſhould it even be dictated by the ſpirit of inſpiration, the energy of the ſame ſpirit, would be neceſſary to induce a ſubmiſſion, and acquieſcence thro the United States.---Now then, he concluded, was the time, with that magnanimity and ſpirit of conceſſion, which would be ſo honorable to ourſelves, and beneficial to our country, forever to baniſh the cauſes of jealouſy and diſtruſt.

Mr. Sedgwick obſerved that on this occaſion it would well become the committee, to reflect, on the cauſes which had produced a difference in the relative magnitude of the State debts; they were

1ſt. A difference of exertion.

2d. A difference reſulting from the avails derived to particular States from confiſcated property, and territorial acquiſitions.

With regard to the firſt, it would not be urged as a reaſon againſt an aſſumption, becauſe it was a ſtrong, and an unanſwerable argument in its favor, for no one would venture to aſſert, that the States which had exhibited, the higheſt evidence of patriotiſm ſhould ſuffer beyond their neighbors, who had leſs painfully ſtruggled for freedom.

With regard to the other cauſe of difference, confiſcated property, Mr. Sedgwick requeſted gentlemen to reflect upon the influence it would have on voluntary contribution, in inſtances where it might have produced conſiderable effects. On principles of juſtice ſaid he, will gentlemen, whoſe States have derived a benefit from this ſource, permit me to enquire into the origin of their right ? Againſt whom did the citizen of New-York offend, who adhered to the public enemy ? Undoubtedly againſt united America. If by ſuch conduct he juſtly forfeited his property, to whom ſhould the benefit of that forfeiture accrue ? To the general government which poſſeſſed the rights of treaty, of peace and of war ; yet New-York who in the inſtance ſuppoſed, received the whole advantage, neither commenced, proſecuted nor concluded the war, nor had ſhe power to do either.

Again with regard to territorial acquiſitions, he aſked "by whoſe exertions, were thoſe acquiſitions made? By thoſe of the individual States ? No, but by the national force, and under national direction." He added, that although the property thus acquired, being in purſuance of the exiſting compact, ſhould be held ſacred, yet he wiſhed gentlemen ſeriouſly to reflect, whether it was in human nature, voluntarily to contribute, to perpetuate an inequality ariſing from thoſe ſources ?—On the whole he concluded, that independent of the aſſumption, there was no reaſon

to expect a liquidation of the demands of the States, and without the latter, he ſhould deſpair of a continuance of the national union.

Mr. Sedgwick obſerved that there was another very important light in which the ſubject might be viewed, viz. the probable conſequence which would flow from the mode or modes which might be adopted, for the diſcharge of the ſtate debts. If ſaid he, they are left on the ſhoulders of the ſtate legiſlatures, the citizens will be very unequally burdened, to diſcharge demands which they will reaſonably conſider as unjuſt. This will create or continue invidious diſtinctions between ſtates and their citizens. It will further promote a ſpirit of emigration among the ſtates, which ſuffer the moſt, which will encreaſe the load, on thoſe who ſhall remain behind, and finally, render it intolerable.

There was, he further obſerved, an evil yet unmentioned of a nature infinitely more malignant and dangerous—that principle of hoſtility, which from this ſtate of things, would be unavoidable, between the national and ſtate governments; for it was eaſy to foreſee that the ſources of revenue, over which the two kinds of government, had a concurrent contract, would be ſeized on by each, to the oppreſſion of the people and the diſcouragement of induſtry. That hence would enſue a war of legiſlation, aided on each ſide, by partizans made active, by the powerful incentives of ſelf intereſt; for there would exiſt an obvious oppoſition of intereſt, between the national and the State creditors. That in ſuch a ſtate of confuſion, the intereſt of both would probably be injured, and the very being of the government brought into danger.

The States, for their own ſakes, would put their debts on a footing as reſpectable as poſſible: To do this, they muſt have recourſe to direct taxes, and to duties of exciſe. The former would be found inadequate to the purpoſe, and carried to any conſiderable degree. would be oppreſſive, unpopular, and might be dangerous. If exciſes were tried, the advantages of commerce would be rendered very unequal in different States: Hence would ariſe a motive for transfering mercantile capitals from one State to another. And he aſked, whether in this way there was any reaſonable foundation to hope that we ſhould become or continue a nation?

Mr. Sedwick further obſerved, that he ſuppoſed no one would imagine that by the adoption of a national government, any additional ability, in regard to the collection of taxes, was given to thoſe of the States: That it would be unneceſſary to remind gentlemen in how diſgraceful a ſituation the ſecurities of States now were—conſtantly fluctuating, and ſhrinking from the graſp of the public creditor, they afforded only a profit and employment, to an army of ſpeculators, roaming from town to town and from village to village, purchaſing of the needy holder, in the moment of diſappointment, when the market was low and ſelling again when it riſes.

On the other hand ſaid Mr. Sedgwick "the advantages of the oppoſite policy are manifeſt and certain.---It will make this government the centre of the wiſhes and affections, of the property of the country---and enable the government riches, to repay for theſe advantages, in the encouragement it will afford, to induſtry and to every uſeful improvement and occupation.---It will terminate in the ſuppreſſion of direct taxes---It will aboliſh invidious diſtinctions between States and their citizens---It will fix the value of the State ſecurities and bring them into operation as a circulating medium---It will give opportunity to the States to attend to the improvement of their internal police, and will more than any other meaſure I have contemplated conſtitute us in fact a nation, a great, flouriſhing and happy people."

He concluded by obſerving, that ſhould any number of the States fund their debts, which at this very time was attempting by ſome, the difficulties in the attainment of this deſirable object would be greatly encreaſed.

THURSDAY, FEB. 25.

In committee of the whole. The aſſumption of the State Debts ſtill under conſideration.

Mr. WHITE ſaid he felt himſelf rather in a diſagreeable ſituation, when he roſe to oppoſe a propoſition which was countenanced by ſo many reſpectable patrons. He thought the original propoſition on the table would however be leſs exceptionable by the adoption of the amendment propoſed by his colleague (Mr. Madiſon) becauſe it would remove ſome of the difficulties that otherwiſe would reſult from it.

In ſtating his objections, he remarked, that if he underſtood the meaning and force of the propoſition, it would have this effect, that the States who have made exertions, and nearly paid the whole of the proportion of their federal debt, ſhould, notwithſtanding, contribute to the payment of the delinquences of others; this appeared to him to be unjuſt. To have a right view of the matter, none of the States could properly be conſidered as creditors of the Union, unleſs they had contributed in a greater degree than was required of them, in proportion to their wealth and number of citizens. To illuſtrate this argument, he would ſuppoſe that the proportion of the expence for Maſſachuſetts and Virginia ſhould each be 10,000,000, then if Maſſachuſetts ſhall advance 15,000000 ſhe would be a creditor for 5,000000, whereas if Virginia ſhould have advanced no more than the 10,000000, than ſhe would have paid no more than her juſt proportion, and could have no demand on the Union. Again, if ſhe had advanced no more than 8,000000 ſhe would juſtly owe 2,000000, which Congreſs could not aſſume to pay without injury to the other. He therefore thought it juſt, that whatever ſum might appear on the liquidation of the account to have been advanced by a State beyond its equal proportion, that that ſhould be aſſumed by the Union, and no other. He had alſo an objection to the amendment, by which a door was to be opened for all claims; this might induce the States to bring forward claims whereby the public debt might be unduly increaſed. For the States generally thinking themſelves creditors, it would create a jealouſy, and there would be a general ſearching for and admiting of claims, to the great injury of the Union. This inconvenience he thought would reſult.

Other inconveniencies might proceed from this circumſtance; in ſome of the States the creditors might refuſe to accept the propoſal: He thought this would be the caſe in Virginia, becauſe in that State their debts were well funded at 6 pr. cent. and the intereſt regularly paid; ſuppoſing this event to take place. what would be the conſequence? the State of Virginia would have to levy taxes to pay this intereſt, and at the ſame time contribute to pay that of other States; difficulties might ariſe on this ground, that to him appeared ſerious.

It appeared to be the intention of the Houſe to fund all the debt, and to make no arrangement for the diſcharge thereof; this he could not approve of. Perpetuating a public debt, he did not conceive advantageous to any country.

Gentlemen ſeemed dazzled with the ſplendor of Great Britain, ſuppoſing her proſperity is owing to her debts; but the reverſe is the caſe—it was her peculiar circumſtances which enabled her to ſupport her debts—that her wealth and power were owing to the ſpirit and induſtry of her inhabitants—to her natural advantages of ſoil, climate, and ſituation, and to the great ſecurity of property under a free conſtitution; that however, were he an Engliſhman, he would tremble for the event: Sure he was, that at a period not very remote, the nation muſt ſink under the weight of the debt, or it muſt be wiped out with a ſpunge to the ruin of thouſands.

The ſame conſequence might follow the perpetuation of the debt in theſe States, though the period might be more remote. If the States were left to themſelves they would purſue meaſures to extinguiſh the debts; this was an object deſirable to accompliſh.

The State of Virginia he knew had extinguiſhed more than 2,000000 of dollars of her public debt. But Virginia was not alone, there were other States he believed, that had alſo effected a conſiderable diminution of their debts.

It had been urged, he ſaid, as an argument in favor of the meaſure, that unleſs theſe debts were aſſumed, that ſome of the States would be induced to lay exciſes, and thereby put it out of the power of the government to raiſe money from that ſource; but the exciſe and the impoſt would not do; no adequate proviſion for the payment of the intereſt could be drawn from theſe ſources. The Secretary had propoſed to raiſe the duty on various articles; but his calculations did not reach a proviſion for the State debts; he had only contemplated thoſe of the Union. How then was the State debts to be provided for? Would Congreſs levy a land tax? As to raiſing the impoſt, it was a meaſure he dreaded; as the duties now ſtood he believed there were no attempts to evade them by ſmuggling. But if they were raiſed, the reverſe would take place; and if the people once became habituated to ſmuggling, it would be impoſſible at any future day to reform them, even by lowering of the duties. With reſpect to direct taxes, he wiſhed the committee to conſider how that would be reliſhed throughout the Union: He thought it would be contrary to the general ſenſe of the people. When they accepted the Conſtitution, it is true they knew it contained a power to levy taxes; but it was not expected that this power would be exerciſed in the preſent ſituation of the country. It would leſſen the influence of the States: They would be reduced a degree lower than they ſhould be, while at the ſame time the general government would be elevated on their ruin. This would be unjuſt and impolitic. The freedom and happineſs of America depended as eſſentially on the State governments as the general government—perhaps more ſo. It was an interference between a State and its citizens; and attaching them to the general government without the conſent of the State.

It had been ſaid by a gentleman from New-York that it was eaſier for one body to draw forth the reſources of the community than for a diſtinct number of legiſlatures—this was true; but he aſked if it would be adminiſtered on the principles of freedom and independence. Congreſs may be properly the ſupreme council, but not the ſupreme legiſlature of the United States. Their legiſlative powers were circumſcribed and confined to particular objects. Becauſe it might be more convenient, it did not follow that Congreſt ſhould for that reaſon exerciſe ſuch authority.

It had been urged as a reaſon for the aſſumption of theſe debts, that the continental ſecurities had in general been purchaſed at low rates, and had centered principally in populous cities—and that the people would not be ſatisfied to pay taxes for them, and have their money continually drawn into theſe cities—unleſs the State debts were adopted, whereby the taxes would go back again into the remote parts of the country.

He ſaid he was ſenſible that the people would very ill brook the payment of taxes when they ſaw the amount flow into the hands of a few individuals. That he had mentioned this in a former debate, and which would have been remedied had a mode which he thought equitable to render them diffuſive been adopted. But the meaſure was over-ruled;—the preſent he thought unjuſt and therefore could not agree to it.

It had been ſaid that the legiſlature of South-Carolina had declined making proviſion for her creditors, in expectation that Congreſs would aſſume her debts—he did not doubt the intelligence---but how the legiſlature of a State could conceive that Congreſs would aſſume to pay her debts was to him extraordinary---ſure he was that Congreſs had never expreſſed ſuch an idea, and he hoped that things had not yet taken that turn, that whatever was deviſed in the cabinet, ſhould be agreed to in the legiſlature ---No regard therefore ought to be paid to what South-Carolina had done.

But a gentleman from Maſſachuſetts ſuppoſed that it would not leſſen the influence of the State governments, that, on the contrary, it would be an advantage to them.---That it was an old doctrine, out of debt, out of danger.---But the meaſure did not place the States out of debt---they were ſtill to pay it---the means of payment being only put into other hands---Sir, ſaid he, if I was indebted on an open account, and I remain in poſſeſſion of my eſtate, and was able to pay it, would it be any advantage to me to give my creditors a mortgage on my land, and put him into immediate poſſeſſion of the profits of my eſtate. Is the caſe not applicable---we do not propoſe to pay the debts of the States but with their property. Is this conferring any favor? Surely not.

He would propoſe, in order to bring the matter to a point, that the aſſumption of the State debts ſhould be confined to ſuch parts only as appeared to be a ſurpluſage, that any State ſhall have advanced beyond its juſt and equal proportion of the expences incurred in the defence of the common rights of America. This ſurpluſage to be aſcertained on a liquidation of the account.

Mr. Lawrance obſerved, that it appeared to him that the reſult of the plan propoſed by the Secretary would be exactly what the gentleman had in view---He ſtated a particular example to ſhew that the operation would produce the ſame effect.

He therefore thought the laſt amendment unneceſſary; but the amendment propoſed yeſterday he acquieſced in, he ſuppoſed it would meet the approbation of gentlemen in all parts of the union ---He anſwered the objection reſpecting the importance of the States retaining their debts, that the legiſlatures of them may meet and have ſomething to do, in providing for the payment of thoſe debts---he did not believe that it was conſidered by the people as neceſſary to the importance of the States, that their legiſlatures ſhould meet merely for this purpoſe.---He anſwered other objections reſpecting the interference with the State governments---the funds he had no doubt would prove fully adequate to all the purpoſes for which the Secretary had deſignated them without any neceſſity for direct taxes, thoſe he truſted would be left to the States fort he ſupport of their particular governments. He concluded by obſerving that the more he contemplated the meaſure, the more he was convinced of its propriety, its juſtice, and its economy---he doubted not that every part of the union would chearfully acquieſce in every meaſure that appeared to be neceſſary to be adopted to promote the general intereſt.

Mr. Moore.---Mr. Chairman, ſaid he, I cannot underſtand the propoſition now on your table, in the ſame light in which the gentleman laſt up has ſtated it; nor can I think its effects will be the ſame with that which my colleague has now offered. If I underſtand the different propoſitions---by the firſt, every citizen in the United States may bring forward his certificate, and loan it to the United States; on which he is intitled to an intereſt; his claim is to be aſſumed and funded. The amendment propoſes, that, after an adjuſtment of all the claims of the States, has been made, that Congreſs will aſſume the payment to each State, whatever ſhe may appear to have paid, on a final ſettlement, more than her juſt ſhare or proportion; but leave it to the States to pay their reſpective citizens, their claims, in whatever mode they pleaſe. In the one caſe, Congreſs only aſſume the balances due; in the other they aſſume the whole debt. Sir, I think we have not ſufficiently aſcertained the amount of the debt; this ought firſt to be done, before we aſſume the payment. The Secretary has ſtated to us the ſuppoſed amount; I make no doubt he has obtained every poſſible information on the ſubject. But even ſuppoſe him to be in poſſeſſion of the amount of the ſettled claims in all the different States, it would not aſcertain it with ſufficient certainty. It is propoſed that the acts limiting the ſettlement of claims, ſhould be repealed; that further time ſhould be given to claimants to come forward. Gentlemen appear impreſſed with the juſtice of this propoſition. To what extent are they likely to be increaſed? If gentlemen will only conſider the number of petitions that have been preſented to Congreſs, by claimants whoſe claims appear to be juſt, they will be ſatisfied, that when the bar to ſettlements is removed, many new claims will be brought forward, and the debt will be increaſed far beyond the preſent ſtatement. Sir, before we aſſume the payment, we ought to know that our reſources are co-extenſive with the demand, under every poſſible diminution that can in the nature of things take place. Should we now aſſume them, and our means be inadequate to the end, I know not of any procedure that could more effectually ruin the credit of the United States.---But my principal objection to the original propoſition is, that we ſhall be obliged to lay a direct tax. What are the reſources the Secretary intends propoſing? They ought firſt to be brought to view. I remember well when the impoſt bill was before us, we were told by gentlemen well informed on that ſubject, that if we increaſed the duties, it would defeat our purpoſe; that it would promote ſmuggling; that on ſo extenſive a ſea coaſt, where we have ſo many harbors, it would be impoſſible to prevent it, if we raiſed duties ſo high as to make it the intereſt of the merchant to ſmuggle. We were likewiſe told, that laying the duties too high would prevent the conſumption, and tend to defeat the revenue. Gentlemen then brought forward every ſubject they could think of, as proper, on which to lay a duty. I conceive that if we aſſume the entire debt, no additional duty adequate to the payment of the intereſt of the whole debt, can now be laid; we muſt lay direct taxes.

A gentleman yeſterday obſerved, that a revenue might be collected by Congreſs with more convenience than the States, at leſs expence, and more effectually. I think we cannot lay a direct tax in a manner ſo convenient to the citizens, at ſo ſmall an expence; or that the collection will be ſo effectual. Sir, I am of opinion that the immediate repreſentatives of the people in their States, can lay a tax which the people can more conveniently pay: They can accommodate not only the ſubjects of taxation, but the time of payment, more to the convenience of the citizens; they are better informed of their circumſtances, and their repreſentation is more equal, than in this body. Sir, I will not undertake to ſay it is unconſtitutional; but I know it is contrary to the light in which the conſtitution was contemplated when it was adopted. The words of the Conſtitution are, That Congreſs ſhall have power to impoſe duties, exciſe, and direct taxes, to pay the debts of the United States. I believe Congreſs, from the firſt forming of the confederation, held up a diſtinction between debts of the United States, and State debts.

I have not had recourſe to the journals of Congreſs ſo as to be certain that this diſtinction has been uniformly made; but inſtances come within my knowledge which prove it. In the requiſitions to the States the diſtinction is made. The State of Virginia from her indiſcriminate mode of adjuſting ſtate and continental claims, has been refuſed a ſettlement of her claims againſt the United States, and commiſſioners are appointed to aſcertain her claims againſt the United States.

Sir, I think the framers of the conſtitution contemplated the payment of the debts of the United States only. But from our aſſuming the State debts, they become debts of the United States, and we are to pay them.

I remember well when the conſtitution was under diſcuſſion in the convention of Virginia; the power of impoſing a direct tax was warmly oppoſed: The advocates for its adoption, ſtated that requiſitions were found to be ineffectual—that occaſions might happen in which ſuch a power would be neceſſary—that it never would be exerciſed but in caſe of neceſſity; but we are about to attempt it when no ſuch neceſſity exiſts. If that convention had ſuppoſed it would have been attempted at ſo early a day, I think they would not yet have adopted the conſtitution.

Mr. Chairman, gentlemen complain that their citizens are oppreſſed with taxes: They ſay that from their extraordinary exertions during the war, they have incurred a debt far exceeding their juſt proportion. I think the amendment propoſed by my colleague, (Mr. White,) will do them ample juſtice—whatever ſum they have paid over and above their juſt proportion, Congreſs will pay. Leave the payment of their juſt proportion to themſelves; this is all that juſtice requires. In the mean time the propoſition will not reſtrain us from availing ourſelves of every reſource in our power, and if there ſhould be a balance in our Treaſury, after paying the debts we have already aſſumed, we may apply it to the payment of the debts of the States.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10.

The committee to whom was referred the petition of Gifford Dally bro't in a report which was read, agreed to, and referred to the committee of appropriations.

The petition of William Bedlow was read the ſecond time—It was moved that it be refered to the Poſt-Maſter-General.

This was objected to, as eſtabliſhing a bad precedent; it was ſaid this is not the only inſtance where public money has been made uſe of, in conſequence of which officers in this department have become delinquent—Congreſs cannot interfere in the preſent caſe but in a due courſe of law—and if relief is now granted, the applications will be numerous; the courſe of juſtice will be diverted from its regular channel, and every public creditor will think himſelf ill uſed if he ſhould not be indulged with a ſuſpenſion of the public demand againſt him; ſuch indulgences it was further ſaid, had produced very pernicious effects in ſome of the States.

In favor of the petitioner it was ſaid that he had been unexpectedly diſmiſſed from office, and that he was liable to pay a very extra rent in conſequence of engaging a houſe in a central ſituation to accommodate the public, in the diſcharge of the duties of his office, and that it appeared reaſonable that he ſhould have relief in this inſtance.

The motion for a reference te the Poſt-Maſter-General, was negatived.

It was then moved that it be referred to a ſpecial committee, which paſſed in the affirmative; and Mr. Benſon, Mr. Fitzſimons, and Mr. Ames were appointed.

The report of the ſecretary of the department of war, on the petition of Colonel John Ely, was read the ſecond time; this report was in favor of granting the prayer of the petition; which was for compenſation for ſervices rendered the priſoners on Long-Iſland, in the capacity of ſurgeon.—It was moved that the report ſhould be accepted—This was objected to, it was ſaid by Mr. Livermore, that he did not conceive that the petitioner was entitled to pay in the double capacity of a ſurgeon and colonel. He received his pay as an officer in the line of the army, during his captivity—if he had a profeſſion which he could exerciſe at that time, he was in a better ſituation than many of his fellow priſoners; and probably did exerciſe it to his private emolument, among the people on the Iſland: If he had not been a priſoner, he could not have exerciſed the profeſſion of a phyſician and a colonel at the ſame time, and draw pay in both capacities. It would be eſtabliſhing a precedent for others to apply; and in all probability, every ſurgeon who wore a commiſſion, that happened to be taken priſoner, will ſet up a ſimilar demand—he was diſpoſed to

reimburſe the petitioner for any actual expenſes he had been at on account of medicines, but was oppoſed to an acceptance of the report in its preſent form.

Mr. Huntington ſupported the motion for an acceptance, he obſerved that the petitioner by virtue of his being a colonel, was under no obligation to exerciſe the office of a phyſician, and therefore his being a colonel did not render his demand leſs valid and juſt—that it would be eſtabliſhing a very bad precedent indeed, if an officer ſhould not be compenſated for ſervices of this kind—Mr. Huntington gave a ſhort account of the ſervices performed by the petitioner, from which it appeared that his labors had been inceſſant, and rendered in the moſt intereſting circumſtances, of which abundant proof was contained in the papers that accompanied the petition.

Mr. Matthews and Mr. Burke ſpoke of the very important ſervices performed by the petitioner—and ſaid that no claim could be better founded.

The queſtion on the motion paſſed in the affirmative, and the report was referred to Mr. Trumbull, Mr. Matthews, and Mr. Burke—who are inſtructed to report a bill or bills purſuant thereto.

The blanks in the bill to promote the progreſs of uſeful arts were filled up and the bill paſſed.

In committee of the whole on the report of the Secretary of the Treaſury—for making proviſion for the ſupport of the public credit.

The propoſition, viz. To have two thirds funded at an annuity or yearly intereſt of ſix per cent. redeemable at the pleaſure of the government, by payment of the principal, and to receive the other third in lands in the weſtern territory, at the rate of 20 cents per acre—was read.

It was moved by Mr. Boudinot—that the clauſe reſpecting the weſtern territory ſhould be ſtruck out—and propoſed the following amendment in lieu thereof—*and to receive for the other third a certificate drawing an intereſt of 6 per cent. per annum, payable in ten years—which certificate ſhall be received as ſpecie in payment for lands in the weſtern territory.*

This amendment after ſome debate was negatived and the queſtion on the propoſition being put, it paſſed in the affirmative.

The next propoſition or alternative being read, the principle of irredeemability contained in it was objected to—and producing a conſiderable debate, precluded a deciſion before the committee roſe.

THURSDAY, MARCH 11.

Several petitions were preſented and read.

In committee of the whole on the Report of the Secretary of the Treaſury, for making proviſion for the ſupport of the public credit.

The following propoſition was read, viz.—To have the whole ſum funded at an annuity, or yearly intereſt, of 4 per cent. irredeemable by any payment exceeding five dollars pr. annum, on account both of principal and intereſt; and to receive as a compenſation for the reduction of intereſt, fifteen dollars and eighty cents, payable in lands, as in the preceeding caſe.

The debate this day turned principally on the *irredeemable* quality propoſed in this alternative.

After a lengthy diſcuſſion the propoſition was negatived.

The next propoſition was then read, and further debate enſued. The committee roſe without coming to a deciſion on a motion made by Mr. Jackſon to ſtrike out what relates to irredeemability in this alternative.

A ſecond memorial from George Scriba, reſpecting a purchaſe of lands in the Weſtern Territory, was read.

Mr. Trumbull brought in a bill for making compenſation to Col. John Ely, for his ſervices, as a Surgeon to the late army of the United States—which was read.

Mr. Wadſworth had leave of abſence for fourteen days. Adjourned.

FRIDAY, MARCH 12.

The bill for granting compenſation to colonel John Ely, was read the ſecond time, and referred to the committee of the whole houſe, to be taken into conſideration this day fortnight.

Several petitions were read and referred.

Mr. Bland obſerved that private memorials and petitions have encreaſed ſo much, that very ſhortly the attention of every individual member of the houſe will be taken up in the inveſtigation of the facts ſet forth in thoſe petitions, to the great interruption of the buſineſs of the nation.

He therefore moved the following reſolutions in ſubſtance.

1ſt. That all memorials and petitions for claims preſented to the houſe, be referred to the heads of departments to report thereon.

2d. That the committees to whom memorials and petitions have been referred, be diſcharged from any further attention to the ſame, and that they be referred as above.—Laid on the table.

In committee of the whole on the Report of the Secretary of the Treaſury, for making proviſion for the ſupport of the public credit.

The third propoſition or alternative was read viz.

"3dly. To have Sixty Six and Two Thirds Dollars funded at "a yearly intereſt of Six per. Cent. irredeemable alſo by any pay- "ment exceeding Four and Two thirds Dollars per annum, on "account both of principal and intereſt—and to have at the end "of ten years, twenty-ſix dollars and eighty-eight cents, funded "at the like intereſt, and rate of redemption."

Mr. Lee moved that the whole propoſition ſhould be rejected—which occaſioned a debate, and the queſtion being taken on the motion, it paſſed in the negative.

Mr. Jackſon's motion for ſtriking out theſe words "irredeemable alſo by any payment exceeding four and two thirds dollars, per annum, on account both of principal and intereſt," was then read, and after ſome further debate, was alſo negatived.

Mr. Fitzſimons after premiſing ſome obſervations reſpecting a more rapid extinction of the principal, than is contemplated by the ſecretary, propoſed that four and two-thirds dollars ſhould be ſtruck out, in order to introduce a higher rate of payment per annum.—He mentioned ſix per cent. on account of principal and intereſt.

Mr. Madiſon mentioned a ſtill higher ſum.

Four and two-thirds dollars after ſome debate were ſtruck out, and the propoſition with the blank paſſed over.

The following propoſitions were rejected, viz.

"4thly. To have an annuity for the remainder of life, upon "the contingency of living to a given age, not leſs diſtant than ten "years, computing intereſt at 4 per cent."

"5thly. To have an annuity for the remainder of life, on the "contingency of the ſurvivorſhip of the youngeſt of two perſons, "computing intereſt in this caſe alſo at 4 per cent.

The Committee then roſe, and the houſe adjourned till To-morrow.

N. B. The debate in our laſt under Tueſday, Feb. 23, ſhould have been introduced by the propoſition for the aſſumption of the State debts.

THE GIFT OF SUBLIMITY.

TO WILLY SHAKESPEARE.

ON the biſorked hill, with Fame's ever-green crown'd,
Encircled with azure ſerene,
Whilſt the ſylphs of his fancy play'd wantonly round,
WILLY SHAKESPEARE enliven'd the ſcene.

As all thoughtful he ſat, keen-ey'd Wiſdom drew near,
Juſt ſent from the regions above,
And, ſtooping, ſhe whiſper'd this truth in his ear,
"Thy lays breathe the ſpirit of Jove."

To his ſide came the muſe of the bowl and the blade,
To hail him great prince of her art;
Whilſt Comedy near all thoſe dimples diſplay'd,
That gave a briſk pulſe to the heart.

Bright Genius approach'd him with pleaſing reſpect,
In her arms a young eagle ſhe bore,
To ſhew, if unſhackled by icy neglect,
To what wonderful heights ſhe could ſoar.

Recumbent before him, ſtraight dropt the ſweet maid,
When expanding the wing of her bird,
"Take the quill of *Sublimity* SHAKESPEARE," ſhe ſaid,
"And go faſhion the tear-ſtarting word."

To Genius he bow'd as he pluck'd forth the quill;
To the breeze were his veſtments unfurl'd;
Like a Sun-beam with Fancy he fled from the hill,
To charm and illumine the world.

For the good of mankind he rare precepts convey'd,
And his ſtrains had ſuch pow'r o'er the Ear,
That whenever he pleas'd from the concourſe that ſtray'd,
He could call up the ſmile or the tear.

Old Time knew his worth—with the ſigh of eſteem,
From the earth bid ſweet WILLY ariſe;
With his Genius he fled, but has left us his theme,
Which ſhall ever be dear to the wiſe.

THE TABLET.——No. XCVI.

"Why ſhould an actor complain of being called from the Theatre, when he has either finiſhed his part, or can carry it on but badly."

SHORT as the life of man is repreſented to be, it is ſtill long enough for him to accompliſh all the purpoſes for which he was created. When the affairs of a perſon are perpetually involved in hurry and confuſion, it betrays a want of ſyſtem or diligence: But it is no proof he is too circumſcribed with reſpect to time. Had he more time, or had he leſs to perform, the ſame difficulty would exiſt, while he errs in laying his plans, or is dilatory in executing them. The beſt ſyſtems will not ſucceed, when managed by indolent men; nor will the moſt active induſtry turn to much account, where there is a defect of ſyſtem. It is not the quantity of buſineſs any one has to perform that embarraſſes him, for nothing can perplex a perſon of method and activity.

The complaints therefore of the ſhortneſs of life are not founded in reaſon. If a man has lived to the age of three ſcore years and ten, without having accompliſhed the main objects that deſerve attention, no period would be long enough to gratify his expectations. The genius of every perſon is limited within certain bounds, which are more or leſs extenſive in different men. Thoſe of a narrow comprehenſion come to their full perfection, before they half run out their exiſtence. Were the life of ſuch people limited to forty years, they ſhould not complain of the ſhortneſs of it, becauſe if it were ten times as long, they would make no new attainments. There are other men whoſe faculties are formed upon a larger ſcale, and who continue to make improvements till they are ſixty years old. But whatever is the period, when the talents ceaſe to be progreſſive, a man gains no advantage from living, more deſirable than he has already gained.

If a perſon, having paſſed the middle age of life, finds that he has acquired little honor or property, he may generally conclude there is ſome deficiency in his capacity or exertions. To ſuch a man length of life will bring no acquiſition of character or riches. Why then ſhould we complain of that which is in itſelf no evil? Had human nature been ſo conſtituted, that our faculties did not ſoon arrive at their moſt perfect point, great would be the misfortune that our ſublunary exiſtence had not a longer duration. Confined however to as ſmall a compaſs as it is, if we employ our moments with care and diligence, we may finiſh our career, with joy and reputation.

NEW-YORK, MARCH 13.

A Correſpondent ſays,—"I love ſhort Speak- "ers, who hit the mark with a ſingle ball—One "ball thro the heart will as ſurely kill as a thou- "ſand grape ſhot —"

Extract of a letter from Boſton—March 3.

"The diſpatch with which buſineſs is carried on in *our* Houſe, as we call it, muſt in a great meaſure be attributed to the activity and genius of our Speaker, Gen. COBB. His independence, quickneſs of apprehenſion and comprehenſion—his induſtry and attention are univerſally applauded: And in turning a queſtion when the vote has been equal, he does it with a promptitude and native firmneſs, which nothing but a mind directed by right principles could inſpire.

"The papers will inform you how our legiſlators go on. Altho *Praiſegod Barebones*, in his rage of Law-Reform, has let in a flood of impertinences, yet the meaſures adopted by the Court have been far better than ſome perſons wiſh to effect elſewhere.

"The Houſe has expreſſed its diſapprobation of *paper taxes*—voted the product of the Exciſe to pay the intereſt of the State Debt—has raiſed the ſalaries of the Superior Judges, &c.—and repealed the Warden Act.

"There is however much anti-federaliſm in the houſe; and **** has brought forward in the ſenate, a budget of alterations to the federal conſtitution.—One of which is that the members of Congreſs, ſhall depend on the legiſlatures of the ſtates for their pay, and the quantum of it—bleſſed effect of individual folly! To ſuppoſe that one ſet of the ſervants of the people, ſhould make wages for another—and a higher ſet too! If our legiſlature ſhould adopt this *meſs*, I hope that Congreſs will ſend out an amendment that the pay of the ſtate legiſlatures, ſhall be ſtated by the repreſentatives of the union."

A joint Committee of both Houſes of the Legiſlature of Maſſachuſetts, have reported the following propoſitions, as the baſis of further amendments to the Conſtitution of the United States—viz.

Firſt.—That Congreſs ſhall not interfere in the regulations of the elections of its Members, except in caſes, where the State Legiſlatures ſhall neglect, or refuſe to make regulations; and that the qualifications of Senators and Repreſentatives, be expreſsly defined in the Conſtitution.

Second.—That Congreſs erect no company with excluſive advantages of commerce.

Third.—That Congreſs have power to eſtabliſh a uniform rule of inhabitancy or ſettlement of the poor of the different States throughout the United States.

Fourth.—That republican forms of Government be eſtabliſhed in the diſtricts which are, or ſhall be ceded to the United States.

Fifth.—That Congreſs ſhall by law provide for calling forth the *poſſe comitatus* for executing the laws of the United State.

Sixth.—That the general Government exerciſe no power but what is expreſsly delegated.

Seventh.—That a part of the internal reſources of taxation be appropriated to the United States, and that a part thereof be excluſively reſerved to the reſpective States, with ſuch exceptions, however, and under ſuch limitations as a war and other extraordinary exigencies may require.

Eighth.—That no ſyſtem for forming the militia be eſtabliſhed, and that no eſtabliſhment of troops in a time of peace, beyond a limited number, be made, if diſapproved by a ſpecified number of the State Legiſlatures, within a limited time after the bills for thoſe purpoſes ſhall be laid before them.

Ninth.—That the Judiciary powers of the United States be more explicitly defined, and more accurately diſtinguiſhed from thoſe of the reſpective States.

Tenth.—That the Senate ſhall not poſſeſs all the Executive and Judicial Powers now veſted in that body.

Eleventh.—That it be left to the ſeveral States, to make compenſations to their Senators and Repreſentatives reſpectively, for their ſervices in Congreſs.

Twelfth.—That the State Legiſlatures have power to recall when they may think it expedient their Federal Senators, and to ſend others in their ſtead—And that the Senators be choſen, all at the ſame time, and for the term of four years.

ARRIVALS.——NEW YORK.

Thurſday. Sloop Rambler, Rogers, Edenton (N. C.) 10 days.
Friday. Schooner Hetty, Peebe, Charleſton, 21 days,
Ship Union Dekay, that was a ſhore on the Eaſt bank, is arrived at this port with the loſs of her Rudder and other ſmall damage.

Capt. Cook arrived off Georgetown-Bar Feb. 23, and landed his paſſengers, with the loſs of his horſes and cargo on deck.

FOR THE GAZETTE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MR. FENNO,

A CITIZEN of the State of Maryland, having been moſt virulently traduced, and ſuffered the ſevereſt treatment from the liberty, or rather licentiouſneſs of the Preſs, is induced to requeſt an inſertion of the following piece on that important ſubject in your paper. It was firſt publiſhed with a little variation in Philadelphia; and is the compoſition of a gentleman, reſpectable for his humanity and knowledge of the laws of his country. Its appearance at this time, may be of ſome uſe, and point out to our Citizens, the true nature of that liberty, which ought not to deſtroy, but rather protect their good name and civil rights.

There is no one wiſhes more ſucceſs to the efforts of ingenious and induſtrious men, employed in the printing buſineſs than myſelf; at the ſame time, I do not conceive that becauſe a printer is in poſſeſſion of a printing apparatus, he can therefore have an abſolute power over the reputation of any of his fellow Citizens in private life; and whenever he pleaſes, or an ill motive may influence, hold them up, as the objects of ſcorn to the deriſion of mankind. This, inſtead of making the preſs a bleſſing, would render it the bane of the community, and juſtly the dread of every good man. That the printers of this continent may ever uſe their liberty with honor and dignity, and not as a cloak of maliciouſneſs, is the ſincere wiſh, of, Sir, your obedient ſervant,

A CITIZEN OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND.

Baltimore, Feb. 23, 1790.

ON THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

"THAT the liberty of the Preſs ought to be invariably preſerved." *Declar. Rights, State of Maryland, ſect.* 38.

THE deſire of Liberty is deeply implanted in the breaſt of every man; however this may be ſuppreſſed for a time by the trammels of a ſlaviſh education, or the dread of a tyrant, when an opportunity occurs, it will infallibly exert itſelf.—Thoſe who have once experienced the bleſſings of Liberty, know how to prize them, and have uſed every means to preſerve them. In Athens, popular Oratory, Oſtraciſm, and the ſatirical performances of their comic authors, were the ſafeguards of liberty. In Rome, the negative which the people had a right to exerciſe upon the decrees of the Senate, and the powerful authority of their tribunes in that body, ſufficed for a while to retain to the people their Rights. Since the invention of the eminently uſeful Art of Printing, the Preſs has become a powerful agent in the cauſe of liberty. The influence which this poſſeſſes over the minds of the people is ſo well known, that deſpots have uniformly refuſed it the privilege of meddling with public affairs. Their mandates are to be treated with ſilent reſpect and obedience; but the propriety, or impropriety, of them is never to be matter of diſcuſſion. In free governments, the liberty of the Preſs has been ſecured either by the fundamental principles of the Conſtitution, or by ſubſequent laws. Nothing can more conduce to keep rulers from ſwerving from their duty, and from aſſuming unconſtitutional powers, than the fear of having their evil deeds expoſed to their conſtituents, through the medium of a Free Preſs. By this, enlightened and ingenious individuals have ample opportunity afforded them of giving uſeful hints, upon which the Legiſlature may afterwards improve.

The proceedings of the different departments of government may be fairly and impartially diſcuſſed; and any invaſion of our civil and religious rights, may be pointed out, and the alarm ſounded, to call forth the People in their defence. If the liberty of the Preſs were confined to this, it would well deſerve the protection of the laws. But alas! Human inſtitutions are too liable to abuſe. Even the greateſt bleſſings are too apt to be converted into evils. Civil liberty carried to exceſs becomes licentiouſneſs and anarchy; religious liberty has been productive of infidelity; and the liberty of the preſs, THE SOLE OBJECT OF WHICH SHOULD BE THE PRESERVATION OF CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS RIGHTS, has been proſtituted to the purpoſes of private enmity and ſpite. Spleenful diſpoſitions have employed it, to vent their malice upon their innocent neighbors; turbulent characters have made a ſtalking horſe of it, from behind which, they have ſhot their envenomed arrows, againſt the peace of the community. If a man entertains, even an unwarrantable diſlike againſt his neighbour, he lays hold of his foibles, (and who has them not?) to render him odious or ridiculous, in the eyes, of his fellow citizens. If he, however erroneouſly, conceives an idea that his neighbour is addicted to any notorious vice, he makes uſe of the freedom, or rather licentiouſneſs of the preſs, to repreſent him in the moſt diſguſting colours to the public. Thus the preſs, which ought to protect the rights and reputation of a citizen, becomes the inſtrument of his diſgrace and ruin.

Are there no means by which this licentiouſneſs may be reſtrained within due bounds? Undoubtedly there are. The line between liberty and licentiouſneſs may be drawn with accuracy, "liberty," ſays the French conſtitution, "conſiſts in doing any thing which is not injurious to another"—Whatever exceeds theſe bounds, *whatever tends to diſturb the public tranquility, or deſtroy the peace of families, whatever blackens the character of individuals, or ruins the reputation of private citizens, let the author of it, give it what name they will, is certainly infamous licentiouſneſs, and ſhould be puniſhed by law as much as burglary, or any other ſpecies of felony.* Shall laws provide for the ſafety of the corporeal part of our ſyſtem, and entirely neglect "that peace of mind which paſſeth all underſtanding?"—Shall a poor wretch who deprives me of a glittering piece of metal, which I can as well do without, be puniſhed with death, or perpetual infamy; and ſhall he who robs me of my reputation, more valuable than all the ſilver in the Mines of Peru, go unpuniſhed? The immortal Shakeſpeare pathetically exclaims,

——"*Good name in man or woman*
"*Is the immediate jewel of the ſoul;*
"*Who ſteals my purſe, ſteals traſh; 'tis ſomething—nothing—*
"*'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been ſlave to thouſands;*
"*But he that filches from me my good name,*
"*Robs me of that which not enriches him,*
"*And makes me poor indeed.*"

(To be continued.)

PHILADELPHIA, March 3.

A correſpondent wiſhes us to recommend to our country readers the raiſing of SUMMER Barley, and, if to be got, SUMMER Wheat, this year. The great prices of grain renders it very deſirable that our Farmers ſhould ſeize THIS GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY; and as there is likely to be greater duties upon ſpirits, rum and wines, Summer Barley is particularly worth attention. Beer and cyder pay no duties, wherefore barley and orchards muſt be more profitable than in paſt years. Hops alſo muſt be remembered.

Extract of a letter from Havre de Grace, to a gentleman in this city, dated Dec. 23, 1789.

"The ſhip Pennſylvania, being detained here by contrary winds, will convey you this letter.

"Since my laſt of the 5th inſtant the prices of flour are lowered very much; thoſe proviſions which a month before were ſo ſcarce, are ſo abundant at preſent that they ſeem to ariſe out of the ground; therefore we thought it proper for your intereſt and your government to inform you of thae revolution.

"M. Necker wrote us lately taht he had given conſiderable orders on flour in America, but that he, at the ſame time, had limited the prices of purchaſe, ſo that it would not coſt our government more than 30s. ſterling per barrel, free of expenſes, and to be delivered in France. This may ſerve you as a rule if you make any ſhipments in that article to France."

BOSTON, March 3.

Extract of a letter from a gentleman who was lately in the Geneſee country.

"One curioſity was a *Brimſtone Spring*, which iſſues from two places about two rods apart, about twenty rods from the bottom of a large hill, where it comes through apertures about five or ſix inches in diameter, and perfectly round, deſcending like a ſwift brook; there is a glade about four rods wide from the ſprings down to the bottom of the hill, which is quite clear, all the buſhes, if ever there were any, are gone, and there is not much ſoil, it is rather a rock of divers colours, and all the way in or near the water, and on every level ſpot there is brimſtone in ſome places 10 or 15 inches deep."

POUGHKEEPSIE, February 23.

NATURAL HISTORY.

In Ulſter county in the ſtate of New-York, on an iſland in the Neverſink Creek, nearly in the latitude, of 41 30 North, a Mr. Baker in the beginning of the month of March laſt, having cut down a large hollow beach tree, to his ſurpriſe, found the cavity in the tree, nearly filled with the common barn ſwallows of this country, in quantity (by his eſtimation) nearly two barrels. They were in a torpid ſtate; but carrying ſome of thoſe which were not injured by the fall of the tree, near a fire, they were preſently re-animated by the warmth, and took the wing with their uſual agility.—This may be depended on as a fact.

NEW-LONDON, March 5.

Whoever attempts in the leaſt to defraud the government of whatever has been granted for the public ſervice by the laws, is not only utterly unworthy to receive the ſmalleſt benefit from thoſe laws, but is likewiſe an enemy to his country. The moment he endeavours to cheat the general revenue of thoſe duties which were ſet apart for the general good, that moment he endeavours to undermine the very baſis of the public ſecurity; to reduce his fellow ſubjects to a ſtate of wretchedneſs and ſlavery, and do his part to diſtreſs his Country.

SPRINGFIELD, March 3.

On Saturday, were conveyed through this town, for New-York, under a ſtrong guard, two brothers by the name of CRANE, who were lately taken up in the county of Worceſter for altering, forging and paſſing notes in imitation of the final ſettlements, ſo called: Theſe perſons have been ſo long concerned in the buſineſs of counterfeiting paper ſecurities of every kind, both public and private, and have acquired ſo great a degree of ſkill and dexterity in it, as to be able to impoſe very often on the moſt wary. They have at different times appeared in the different dreſſes of the gentleman and the beggar, as the occaſion might require;—when lately apprehended, they were genteelly dreſſed, and paſſed by the name of Smith: They have often defied the arm of authority, boaſting of powerful connexions which they were aſſured would buy them out of trouble;—they have often eluded the ſtricteſt ſearch of thoſe who had been injured by them, but are now in a fair way to meet with a due reward for their ſervices.

☞ *Wanted by the Editor of this paper, a Houſe that will accommodate a large family, and the printing buſineſs—from the firſt of May next.*

PRICE CURRENT.——NEW-YORK.

MARCH 13.——DOLLARS at 8s.

JAMAICA Spirits,	5s 6.
Antigua Rum,	4s 9. a 5s.
St. Croix, do.	4s 8.
Country, do.	3s.
Molaſſes,	2s 2.
Brandy,	6s 6. a 6s 3.
Geneva,	5s.
Do. in caſes,	28s. a 29s.
Muſcovado Sugar,	80s. a 72s.
Loaf, do.	1s 3.
Lump, do.	1s 1½.
Pepper,	3s. 3
Pimento,	1s. a 1s 4.
Coffee,	1s 7. a 1s 8.
Indigo, (Carolina)	3s. a 6s.
Do. French,	18s.
Rice,	21s.
Superfine Flour,	60s.
Common do.	52s.
Rye do.	26s. a 28s.
Indian Meal,	18s. 20s.
Rye,	4s 9. *pr. buſh.*
Wheat,	10s 6.
Corn, (Southern)	4s.
Do. (Northern,)	4s 3. a 4s 6.
Beef, firſt quality,	45s. a 48s.
Pork, firſt quality,	70s. a 75s.
Oats,	1s 7.
Flax-ſeed,	5s 9 a 6s.
Ship bread per cwt.	21s.
Country refined bar-iron,	28l. a 30l.
Do. bloomery,	25l. a 26l.
Swedes do.	45l.
Ruſſia do.	30l.
Pig-iron,	8l 10s. a 9l.
German ſteel, 9d. per lb.	
Nails American, by caſk. per. lb. 4d.	14d.
Do. do. do. 6d.	12d.
Do. do. do. 8d.	9½d.
Do. do. do. 10d.	7½d a 8½d.
Do. do. do. 12d.	
Do. do. do. 20d.	
Do. do. do, 24d.	
Pot aſh, per ton,	39l. a 40l.
Pearl aſh,	48l a 50l.
Bees-wax per lb.	2s.
Mackarel per barr.	26s. a 30s.
Herrings,	18s.
Mahogany, Jamaica, per foot,	10d.
Dominico, do.	9d.
Honduras, do.	7d.
Logwood unchipped, pr. ton.	8l.
Do. chipped.	14l.
2 inch white oak plank, per m.	10l. 10s.
1 inch do.	5l.
2 inch white pine plank,	8l.
1½ inch do.	6l. 10s.
1 inch do.	3l. 10s.
2 inch pitch pine do.	10l.
1½ inch do.	6l. 10s.
1 inch do.	4l.
Pitch pine ſcantling,	3l. 8s.
Cyprus 2 feet ſhingles,	1l. 10s.
Do. 22 inch do.	1l. 8s.
Cedar 2 inch do.	1l. 10s
Do. 22 inch do.	1l. 6s.
Do. 18. inch do.	18s
Butt white oak ſtaves,	35s.
Pipe do. do.	9l.
Hogſhead do. do.	6l. 10s.
Do. do. heading,	8l.
Iriſh barrel do. ſtaves,	3l. 5s.
Hogſhead red oak do.	5l. 5s
Do. French do.	5l.
Hogſhead hoops,	4l.
Whiteoak ſquare timber per ſquare foot,	10d.
Red wood, per ton,	28l.
Fuſtick,	10l.
Beaver, per lb.	12s. a 16s.
Otter per ſkin,	9s. 32s.
Grey fox,	4s 7.
Martin,	4s 10.
Racoon,	3s 6 a 7s 6.
Muſkrat,	10d. a 14d.
Beaver hats,	64s.
Caſtor do.	48s.
Chocolate,	14d.
Cocoa,	70s. a 80s.
Cotton,	1s 9.
Tar, pr. bar.	10s.
Pitch,	14s.
Turpentine,	18s. a 20s.
Tobacco, James River,	4d. a 3½d.
Do. York,	4d. a 3½d.
Do. Rappahanock,	2d. a 3½d.
Do. Maryland, coloured,	5½d.
Do. Weſtern-ſhore,	2d a 3½d.
Lead in pigs, pr cwt.	60s.
Do. bars,	68s.
Do. Shot,	68s.
Red lead,	68s.
White do. dry,	95s.
White do. in oil,	5l. 12s.
Salt-petre hams,	7½d.
Spermaceti candles,	8s.
Mould do.	11d. a 1s.
Tallow dipt,	9½d.
Soap,	5d. a 8d.
Caſtile ſoap,	9d. a 10d.
Engliſh cheeſe, pr. lb.	15d.
Country do.	5d.
Butter,	1s.
Hyſon tea,	9s 6. a 10s.
Sequin do.	6s 6.
Bohea do.	2s 8. a 2s 9
Ginſeng,	2s. a 2s 6.
Starch Poland,	7d.
Snuff,	2s 3.
Allum ſalt, water meaſure, pr. buſh.	3s 6.
Liverpool do.	2s.
Madeira wine, pr. pipe,	60l. a 90l.
Port,	46l.
Liſbon, pr. gal.	5s.
Teneriff,	4s.
Fyall,	3s 3.
Dutch gun-powder, pr. cwt.	8l.
Nail rods, pr. ton,	34l. 36l.
Lintſeed oil, pr. gal.	4s.
Whale do. pr. barrel,	50s. a 56s.
Spermaceti do,	6l.
Shake-down hhds.	3s 6

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A work which has long been wanted, to accommodate Schools; and for the uſe of children in families. Geography now claims a very general attention—and that of our country in a particular manner; for in proportion as this is underſtood it will inſpire the riſing generation with elevated ideas of their own character, when contemplating the magnificent theatre on which they are to act the parts aſſigned them: Hence the propriety of the obſervation—

Let all foreign climes alone,
Till you underſtand your own.

To be SOLD,

At PUBLIC AUCTION, on the Firſt Day of APRIL next, (if not diſpoſed of before, at Private Sale.)

THAT pleaſant and valuable Place formerly called COLES-FERRY, now by the name of VANDUZER'S, on Staten Iſland, Richmond County, with two good ſufficient Pettiaugers for the ferrying buſineſs. It is a beautiful ſituation, and one of the beſt ſtands for a Ferry, or Tavern, on Staten-Iſland, and an excellent Shad and Herring Fiſhery within 20 yards of the door, Black-Fiſh, and all other kind of Fiſh in their ſeaſon. It is likewiſe the beſt and moſt convenient Ferry to Long-Iſland, where a number of paſſengers paſs and repaſs. It lies within two miles of the Point of the Narrows, and between 8 and 9 miles from New-York. There is about 30 acres of excellent good Land, chiefly Meadow, with a very good Wharf, Houſe, Barn and Garden—the whole being in good repair. It will alſo make a beautiful Country Seat, fit for any gentleman.

For Particulars enquire of JOHN ANDERSON, corner of the Exchange, or CHARLES M'LEAN, White Hall, New-York, or of Meſſrs BYERSS and REILLY, Staten-Iſland, or of the Subſcriber on the premiſes, where the conditions of ſale will be made known. ABRAHAM VANDUZER.

Staten-Iſland, March 6, 1790.

To be LET,

And poſſeſſion given the 1ſt of April, for one or more years, (two miles and half from this city, on the Greenwich road,)

THAT New TWO STORY HOUSE—four Rooms on a floor; with ſix fire places; a new Barn, and Well of excellent Water; a young Orchard of Fruit Trees, with 7½ acres of Land, the moſt part Meadow. For particulars enquire at No. 7, Maiden-Lane. *New-York, February* 20.